



Living Healthy Working Well

Been Downsized? Now What?

Sooner or later, almost everyone has to deal with an unplanned job transition. Losing your job doesn't mean the end of the world - often it opens doors to other opportunities. Think of it as a turning point; a time to reflect on what you really want to do with the rest of your life.

When you go through a downsizing, the experience can be like an emotional roller coaster. You can feel shock, mourning, anger, and depression before coming to terms with what's happening. When your initial reaction to being laid off has run its course, start focusing on the future. Remember, if you have a good skills set and network with friends and business associates, you will get another job. In the meantime, here are a few tips to help you make the transition.



Understand that it isn't personal. It is not your fault or a reflection on you. You're just caught in the middle of what so many workers are facing right now - a restructuring of how business is conducted.

Develop a new budget. Find ways to reduce your expenses as much as you can for the time being. It can ease the stress of being unemployed.

Explore new options. This may be a good time to check and see if the business you are in is changing as a whole. If so, you may want to explore other types of businesses. One way to do this is to rearrange your résumé, putting your skills at the top and your work history at the bottom.

Develop a job search plan. Today, there are many ways to conduct a job search. You can go on the Internet, notify your business contacts or people in your network that you have re-entered the job market, or use the traditional method of reading ads in the employment section. The more methods you use, the more opportunities you'll find.

Consider alternative work arrangements. If money is tight, you may need to find a job quickly. Consider temporary employment or even part-time work. This will still allow you to continue looking for full-time employment (and often employers hire temps and part-timers for full-time positions, because they've seen them work).

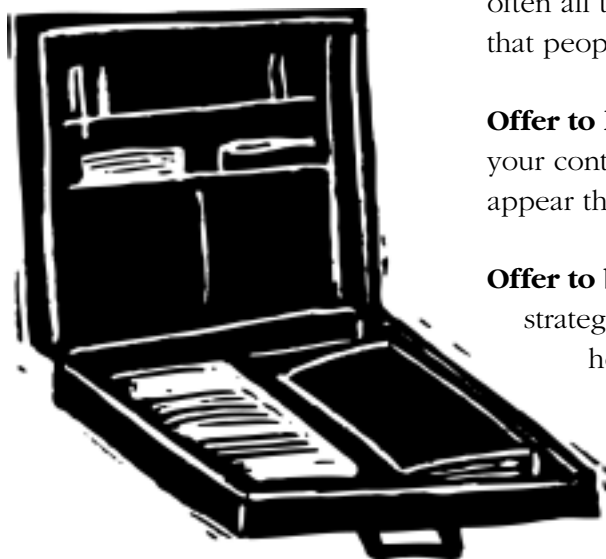


Start looking for a new job now. Don't wait until your benefits or severance package is about to run out. Getting an early start will give you the opportunity to make choices and have options. You don't want to be put in a position of desperation, as it will surely come across in interviews.

Regardless of how your situation relates to downsizing, know that you have a choice. You can choose to be hopeful and optimistic. Positive things come out of what may, at first, seem like bad situations. Choose to focus on the good things in your life. It will help make going through a downsizing a little easier.

Remember . . .

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to you and your eligible dependents. EAP counselors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to discuss your concerns and provide confidential assistance at no cost to you. Just call us at 1-800-6-EAP-4-CA (1-800-632-7422). If you are using a TTY, please call 1-800-542-2833. As part of your EAP, you now have access to MagellanAssist. Visit today at <http://www.dpa.ca.gov/benefits/other/eap/Assist.shtm>



Offering Support to Others Facing the Loss of a Job

When a spouse, family member, friend or co-worker loses his or her job, it can be emotional for everyone. The person who has lost his or her job needs extra support and assurance from family and friends during this time. Here are some suggestions on how you can help someone who has suffered a job loss:

Remember that getting over any type of loss takes time. The loss of a job can evoke the same emotions as any other form of grief. Allow the person time to grieve over the loss. With your support, he will know he is valued and can still offer something valuable to the workplace.

Encourage your friend to talk about it. Being a sounding board and a good listener not only lets the person know that you care, but is also therapeutic. Talking will allow your friend or family member to vent emotions in a healthy manner and begin to accept the reality of the situation.

Avoid pat answers and clichés. Comments such as “Some things are just meant to be” or “Every cloud has a silver lining” may be more frustrating than helpful. Even offering advice about possible job alternatives with statements like, “Hey, I bet you’d be good at . . .” may be better left unsaid unless it really reflects the person’s true abilities or interests.

Just being there is important. Often it’s difficult to know what to say to a person who has just lost her job. It can equal the loss of words you feel when a friend experiences a death of a loved one. Just being there is often all that’s needed. Your presence will help alleviate your friend’s fears that people think less of her because she has lost her job.

Offer to help with the job search. Offer to use your network or call on your contacts to find out about job openings. However, be careful not to appear that you are trying to take over the job search.

Offer to be a job coach. Conduct mock interviews, help form job search strategies and discuss areas where changes/self-improvement might be helpful.